

## Graduate Student Association Meeting Minutes

Date: November 5, 2014

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: James Room, Sadler Center

Presiding Officer: Christian Bale, President

Meeting called to order at 7:10 pm by the President.

Christian asks whether GSA should have two meetings per month, in order to have more time to discuss items. The consensus is that instead of increasing the frequency of meetings we will instead increase the length of each meeting. Christian will also make an advance agenda to try to streamline discussions during meetings.

Nabeel Siddiqui has been selected as the representative to the Graduate Student Advisory Board for Social Sciences. He gives an overview of the last Advisory Board meeting. The Advisory Board is always trying to raise funds for graduate students, and trying to increase the profile of graduate students on campus. There is a concern that graduate students are not always put at the forefront of requests for funding from alumni.

Josh Magee is the representative for Natural Sciences.

Dean Torczon thanks GSA for pushing the Advisory Board Representative elections through so Nabeel and Josh could attend last meeting. We now have the largest board ever, and they really wanted to have students present on the board. They were thrilled that we had two new members. Dean Torczon has urged the Advisory Board to play a bigger role in advocacy for graduate students on campus. They asked Dean Torczon, in turn, to invite President Reveley and Matthew Lambert, Development Vice President, to come and talk to them. During the meeting, the concern was brought up that there is a perception that graduates of William and Mary's graduate programs don't give money back to the institution, and that they're not committed to the institution in the way that undergrads are. She feels that this may be why they are not at the forefront of receiving help. George Miller, one of the more senior members of the board, took exception to this. He told Pres. Reveley that "it's because you don't ask the right way."

She has an idea to raise the profile of graduate students on campus. She wants to match up to \$1000 against graduate students who may give to William and Mary, preferably in the symbolic amount of \$16.93. She asks whether our colleagues in each department be willing to give a small amount of money, which would increase participation statistics in in-house giving and demonstrate the graduate students' commitment to the school. Advancement is aiming for a 25% participation rate from undergrads this year. They have a campaign in process to do this, but so far they have not targeted graduate students. She points out that students can go to any website for a William and Mary department or program, and there will be a link off to the side where money can be given. It automatically assigns money to the entity you want to donate to.

There is a consensus that GSA supports this idea.

Christian mentions that GSA needs to approve travel funding. Katie Moore, Lindsay Garcia, and Patrick Blank are on the committee and will meet to do this.

Christian announces that the Graduate Council (GC) will be doing two upcoming fundraisers. One is to support the Avalon Women's Shelter. It is being organized by the Law School, but we'll be doing it as a graduate community. There will be talks, a stage performance, and a potluck meal. Second, the GC will be putting on a semi-formal event at the Muscarelli Art Museum. He is also looking to start a fund for graduate students who have children and want to enroll them in William and Mary's child care center.

He mentions his recent email about conversation programs at the Language Houses. Professors were overwhelmed by the number of email responses received, and registration is now restricted to Facebook signup. Private sessions are available for \$10.

Christian also wants to do a social event before the end of the year. There is a suggestion of an "appetizer buy" at College Delly the week after Thanksgiving. Sean Koebley, Social Chair, offers to plan this event. There is a consensus that GSA provide \$150 for this event.

Would Executive Board meet one more time before the end of the term- yes

Menuka Ban reports that the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS) has implemented policy changes in the handbook. The Graduate School is tightening up policies about retaking classes to up students' GPA. There have also been efforts to standardize Ph.D. time-to-degree limits. There has been a proposal that students who come in with no M.A. be allowed nine years to complete the Ph.D. With an M.A., students would be allowed seven years.

Josh Magee, Physics Representative, is organizing the Professors' Roundtable, which is a multidisciplinary event in the spring where GSA picks one topic and four or five professors from various disciplines to come talk about it, with food. He says that, unfortunately, all the professors who originally signed up except for one can no longer do participate. He needs more people to help plan the event. If anyone is interested in helping plan, please let him know.

Josh also reports on the Graduate Student Advisory Board. They want to start highlighting more graduate student involvement and raise graduate student visibility on-campus. He thinks it would be good for the William and Mary website to highlight some graduate student blogs on front page, which now contains only blogs by undergraduates. He wants to get a few graduate students who are interested in blogging once a week, and interviewing other students, etc. We could aim to be featured on the front page, in the alumni magazine, and possibly other outlets, as well. Christian suggests that each department should ask our own councils whether someone wants to take on blogging.

Jacob Derr, Student Senate Representative, reports that there have been no major recent issues. The most important recent thing was the Senate Finance Committee meeting. Physics Fest got really underfunded. He has some idea why that happened and thinks that there is the possibility of resubmitting.

